

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY OSD/ISA: MAJ. INGRAM
APPROVED BY EUR/RPM: WSHINN, JR.
OSD/ISA: MGEN BOWMAN
PM/ISP: COL. MATHISON
EUR/RPM: JAFROEBE, JR.

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TO ALL NATO CAPITALS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY

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TAGS: NATO, MPOL

SUBJECT: TANK GUN ANNOUNCEMENT

1. THE FOLLOWING FACT SHEET AND TRANSCRIPT OF SECRETARY
OF THE ARMY'S PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT ARE INTENDED TO
PROVIDE EMBASSIES WITH GUIDANCE ON THE US DECISION
TO GO FOR THE GERMAN TANK GUN.

2. FACT SHEET.

Q. WHAT IS THE DECISION?

A. THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY WITH THE CONCURRENCE
OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE HAS RECOMMENDED TO CONGRESS
THAT THE US ARMY BEGIN DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING OF THE
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GERMAN 120MM GUN SYSTEM TO ADAPT IT FOR PRODUCTION AS
THE FUTURE MAIN GUN FOR THE XM-1 TANK.

Q. WHY A 120MM GUN?

A. THE 105MM GUN WILL SATISFY OUR NEAR-TERM REQUIREMENTS.
HOWEVER, THE ARMY IS CONVINCED THAT THE GREATER INHERENT
GUN POWER OF THE 120MM SYSTEM GIVES IT GREATER POTENTIAL
COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS AGAINST FUTURE SOVIET ARMOR
DEVELOPMENTS.

Q. WHY THE GERMAN GUN?

A. BOTH THE UK AND THE GERMAN 120MM GUNS PERFORMED WELL DURING THE TRIALS, ALTHOUGH THE GERMAN SYSTEM IS A MORE MATURE SYSTEM. THE DETERMINING CONSIDERATION WAS THE FACT THAT THERE WILL BE MORE GERMAN TANKS WITH 120MM GUNS, WHICH WILL INCREASE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR INTEROPERABILITY. THIS IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT IN TERMS OF AMMUNITION.

Q. WHY 105MM GUNS ON THE FIRST XM-1'S?

A. THE ARMY HAS A CLEAR NEED TO FIELD THE XM-1 AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE FIRST SERIES OF XM-1'S IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN PRODUCTION IN 1979. THESE TANKS WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH 105MM GUNS. THE 120MM SYSTEM NEEDS TO BE DEVELOPED AND TESTED FOR ADAPTATION TO THE XM-1, AND ADDITIONAL TYPES OF AMMUNITION MUST BE DEVELOPED. THE ARMY EXPECTS TO HAVE THIS QUESTION RESOLVED BY LATE 1981.

Q. WHEN WILL THE FIRST XM-1'S WITH 120MM GUNS BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

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PRODUCTION?

A. ASSUMING FULL FUNDING OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND NO MAJOR DIFFICULTIES, THE ARMY EXPECTS THAT THE 120MM GUN WILL BE MOUNTED ON A SECOND SERIES OF XM-1 TANKS, WHICH SHOULD GO INTO PRODUCTION IN 1984.

Q. WHAT SPECIFICALLY MUST BE DONE TO ADAPT THE 120MM GUN TO THE XM-1 AND TO DEVELOP THE ADDITIONAL TYPES OF AMMUNITION?

A. THE GUN IS NOW IN THE LATER STAGES OF FULL SCALE ENGINEERING DEVELOPMENT, AND THE INITIAL PRODUCTION OF THE GUN FOR GERMAN USE IS NOT SCHEDULED TO BEGIN UNTIL MID-1979. WHILE PARTICIPATING IN THE FINAL DEVELOPMENT STAGE, THE US ARMY MUST ADAPT ITS TURRET, CONVERT THE DESIGN, AND DEVELOP NEW AMMUNITION. ALTHOUGH THE TURRET HAS ALREADY BEEN MODIFIED TO ACCOMMODATE THE 120MM GUN, ADAPTATION WILL REQUIRE A NEW GUN MOUNT, REVISIONS TO THE FIRE CONTROL AND GUN-TURRET DRIVE, RELOCATION OF NUMEROUS COMPONENTS, AND REARRANGEMENT OF AMMUNITION STOWAGE. THE DESIGN MUST BE CONVERTED TO US MANUFACTURING PROCESSES AND MAINTENANCE TECHNIQUES TO INCREASE US PRODUCTION AND MAINTENANCE EFFICIENCY. THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN REGARDS TO THE BREECH. THE PRESENT AMMUNITION

FAMILY INCLUDES ONLY THE HEAT AND KE ANTI-TANK ROUNDS, AND DOES NOT INCLUDE THE TRAINING AND OTHER ROUNDS REQUIRED BY THE US ARMY. ADDITIONALLY, THE ARMY WILL DO FURTHER TESTING OF THE CASELESS AMMUNITION AND OF CERTAIN ADVANCED AMMUNITION CONCEPTS RECENTLY DEMONSTRATED.

Q. WHY WAS SOME OF THIS WORK NOT DONE BEFORE NOW?

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A. THE APPROPRIATIONS BILL FOR 1978 SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED ANY SUCH ACTION PRIOR TO AN EVALUATION AND A RECOMMENDATION BY THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY TO CONGRESS. NOW THAT THE EVALUATION IS COMPLETED, THE SECRETARY IS RECOMMENDING A REPROGRAMMING OF FUNDS TO INITIATE THE REQUIRED DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING PROGRAM.

Q. IS IT POSSIBLE THAT THE 120MM GUN WILL NOT BE PRODUCED FOR THE XM-1?

A. INTRODUCTION OF THE 120MM GUN IS DEPENDENT UPON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS. THE ARMY ANTICIPATES NO SIGNIFICANT RISKS.

Q. HOW MUCH WILL THIS DECISION COST?

A. EACH TANK WITH A 120MM GUN WILL COST APPROXIMATELY

16,000 DOLLARS (FY-80 DOLLARS) MORE THAN IT WOULD WITH A 105MM GUN. THE TOTAL LIFE CYCLE COST INCREASE TO THE XM-1 WILL BE AROUND 2-6 PERCENT.

Q. WHAT WILL PRODUCTION RIGHTS COST?

A. WE WILL PAY 1.4 MILLION DOLLARS FOR THE MANUFACTURER'S KNOW-HOW. COMPENSATION FOR PRODUCTION OF THE GUN AND AMMUNITION WILL BE 5 MILLION DOLLARS, PLUS THREE PERCENT OF THE US PRODUCTION COST UP TO A COMBINED TOTAL OF 25 MILLION DOLLARS. IF WE SELL THIS SYSTEM TO OTHER NATIONS, THE ROYALTY WILL BE 5 PERCENT UP TO A CEILING OF 25 MILLION DOLLARS ON THOSE SALES. DURATION OF ROYALTY PAYMENTS WILL BE 10 YEARS FOR US DEFENSE
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USE AND 12 YEARS FOR EXPORT SALES--FROM THE DATE OF DELIVERY OF FIRST PRODUCTION OF XM-1'S EQUIPPED WITH THE 120MM GUN.

Q. WHO WILL PRODUCE THE GUN SYSTEM?

A. THE US WILL PRODUCE ALL GUNS AND AMMUNITION FOR ITS OWN TROOP USE. WATERVLIET ARSENAL WILL PROBABLY PRODUCE THE GUN AND THE BREECH. CHRYSLER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MOUNT AND RECOIL SYSTEM. THE DECISION ON THE US PRODUCER OF THE AMMUNITON IS STILL TO BE MADE.

Q. HOW WILL THIS DECISION AFFECT THE SALE OF AWACS TO GERMANY?

A. THE ARMY EVALUATION AND DECISION ON THE TANK GUN WAS INDEPENDENT OF THE GERMAN DECISIONS REGARDING THE AWACS.

3. TRANSCRIPT OF SECRETARY OF THE ARMY'S PRESS CONFERENCE JANUARY 3 (EXCERPTS).

MR. THOMAS B. ROSS, ASD(PA): GENTLEMEN, SECRETARY ALEXANDER HAS A STATEMENT, AND THEN HE WILL BE PREPARED TO TAKE SOME QUESTIONS WITH HIS COLLEAGUES. WE ARE ON THE RECORD.

ALEXANDER: THE PURPOSE OF THIS PRESS CONFERENCE IS TO ANNOUNCE TO YOU MY RECOMMENDATION TO THE CONGRESS CONCERNING THE MAIN ARMAMENT OF THE XM-1 TANK. THE RECOMMENDATION SUBMITTED TO THE CONGRESS THIS MORNING REQUESTS THAT THE XM-1 PRODUCTION BE INITIATED IN 1979 AS SCHEDULED WITH THE 105 GUN. HOWEVER, UPON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF NECESSARY TESTS AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS, A MODIFIED VERSION OF THE GERMAN 120 SMOOTH BORE WEAPON WILL BE PHASED INTO PRODUCTION. WE
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ESTIMATE THAT THE FIRST XM-1 WITH 120 GUN SHOULD BE AVAILABLE BY 1984.

LET ME GIVE YOU THE PRIMARY REASONS FOR THIS DECISION. FIRST, WHILE WE ARE CONFIDENT OF THE ABILITY OF THE 105 WITH OUR IMPROVED AMMUNITION TO MEET CURRENT AND NEAR-TERM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE LONGER TERM, THE INHERENT SUPERIOR GUN POWER OF THE LARGER GUN WILL PROVIDE A SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGE AGAINST MORE ADVANCED ARMORS.

SECOND, LONG-RANGE TANK WEAPON COMMONALITY WITHIN NATO IS INCREASED BY U.S. ADOPTION OF THE GERMAN WEAPON RATHER THAN THE BRITISH GUN. THIS IS PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF THE LARGER GERMAN TANK FLEET AND THE LACK OF COMPLETE

INTEROPERABILITY BETWEEN THE FIELDDED CHIEFTAIN TANK GUN AND THE NEW BRITISH WEAPON. THE GERMAN AND

BRITISH GUNS ARE BASICALLY SIMILAR IN PERFORMANCE AND POTENTIAL. THIS DECISION WILL KEEP THE ARMY ON SCHEDULE WITH ITS URGENTLY NEEDED NEW TANK GUN WHILE INSURING THAT IT COULD HAVE ADEQUATE GUN POWER FOR THE LONGER TERM.

I AM HAPPY TO TRY AND ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS.

Q: MR. SECRETARY, WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS IN TERMS OF NATO AND COMMONALITY OF WEAPONRY AND SO FORTH? IS THIS THE MOST ADVANCED, MOST SIGNIFICANT STEP TOWARD COMMONALITY OF WEAPONS?

A: THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL AGREEMENTS WITH OUR ALLIES. THIS IS, WE BELIEVE, AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD, THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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IS, IF OUR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CONGRESS IS ACCEPTED. THE CONCEPT OF INTEROPERABILITY, STANDARDIZATION AND RATIONALIZATION IS A VERY IMPORTANT ONE FOR THE ALLIANCE AS WE ALL KNOW. WE HAVE WORKED WITH OUR ALLIES IN NATO TO TRY AND ACCOMMODATE PROGRESS IN THIS FIELD. WE BELIEVE THAT IT WILL BE A HELPFUL STEP FORWARD TO INCORPORATE THE 120 ONTO THE XM-1 TANK IN THE LONG TERM IN THE MID-EIGHTIES.

Q: HAVE WE COME TO ANY AGREEMENT, SIR, AT ALL, WITH THE GERMANS IN TERMS OF THEM BUYING U.S. ENGINE OR THEM BUYING AWACS OR SOMETHING MADE BY THE UNITED STATES?

A: NO, WE HAVE NOT ACTUALLY, SPECIFICALLY, IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE LICENSING AGREEMENTS WITH MR. EBERHARDT IN MY PERSONAL DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM BEFORE WE STARTED OUR NEGOTIATIONS HERE, I STATED TO HIM AND HE AGREED THAT THIS WOULD BE A DISCUSSION OF THE MAIN TANK GUN AND NO OTHER ITEMS. THIS IS SPECIFICALLY WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF THE ARMY AND WHAT OUR NEGOTIATIONS WERE ABOUT.

ADDITIONALLY, PRIOR TO THE INITIATION OF THE DISCUSSIONS THEMSELVES WE MADE THIS POINT IN FRONT OF ALL OF THE NEGOTIATORS AND TO MY KNOWLEDGE, AND WE CAN VERIFY THIS WITH DR. LABERGE, WHO WAS THERE THE ENTIRE TIME, NO DISCUSSION TOOK PLACE OF AWACS.

Q: MR. SECRETARY, HOW MUCH OF THE TOTAL XM-1 BUY IS GOING TO BE EQUIPPED WITH THE 105, AND ARE YOU GOING TO LATER REPLACE THE 105 WITH THE 120, AND IF SO, HOW MUCH IS THAT GOING TO COST?

A: WELL, AS YOU KNOW, WE WANT FIRST AND FOREMOST THAT

THE XM-1 CONTINUE AND CONTINUE ON SCHEDULE, AND THAT
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WILL BE WITH 105'S. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GIVE AN
EXACT NUMBER, BUT WHEN ONE THINKS OF THE XM-1 GOING
INTO AND BEYOND THE YEAR 2000 AS THE TANK FOR THE
UNITED STATES, I THINK WE CAN ANTICIPATE THAT THERE
WILL BE THOUSANDS OF TANKS WITH 120'S, PRESUMING
THEY MEET THE TESTS THAT ARE GOING TO BE TAKING
PLACE BETWEEN NOW AND 1981.

Q: YOU NOW HAVE 3300 THAT YOU ARE PLANNING TO BUY
HOW MANY OF THOSE ARE GOING TO HAVE THE 105 AND HOW
MANY THE 120, AND ARE YOU GOING TO BACKFIT THE ONES
WITH THE 105 WITH THE 120?

A: WHEN I GAVE THE INDICATION OF GOING TOWARD THE
YEAR 2000, OF COURSE IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO LOOK
AS FAR AHEAD AS WE POSSIBLY CAN THAT WOULD GO BEYOND
THE 3300 THAT ARE CONTEMPLATED AT THE PRESENT TIME.
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO BE PRECISE AND SAY HOW MANY
TANKS WILL COME OFF THE LINE WITH 105'S AND HOW
MANY WITH 120'S. SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT THERE WILL
BE THOUSANDS WITH THE 120.

Q: MR. SECRETARY, CAN I ASK TWO QUESTIONS, ONE OF YOU
AND ONE OF GENERAL KERWIN?

OF YOU, I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IN SIMPLEST TERMS WHAT
THE CO-PRODUCTION ARRANGEMENTS ARE.

OF GENERAL KERWIN, IS THIS DECISION, THE DECISION THE
UNIFORMED ARMY WOULD HAVE MADE ON THE GUN, OR WOULD
THE UNIFORMED ARMY HAVE GONE ANOTHER WAY ON THE
SELECTION?

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A: ON THE CO-PRODUCTION TERMS, THE AGREEMENT THAT
HAS BEEN REACHED THOUGH HAS NOT BEEN FINALIZED. THE
SIGNATURES ARE NOT ON THE DOTTED LINES, BUT I CAN
TELL YOU IN GENERAL WHAT THEY AMOUNT TO.

THEY ARE, WE CONSIDER, AGREEMENTS THAT ARE FAIR TO
BOTH GOVERNMENTS AND AGREEMENTS THAT WERE NECESSARILY

NEGOTIATED WITH ALLIES.

THEY WOULD CALL FOR ROYALTY RATES THAT WERE BASICALLY
DRIVEN BY THE TRIPARTITE ARRANGEMENT THAT WE HAD ON THE

RANK GOING BACK A FEW YEARS; FOR DOMESTIC PRODUCTION A THREE PERCENT ROYALTY RATE GOING TO A MAXIMUM FOR 25 MILLION DOLLARS; FOR EXPORT PRODUCTION A FIVE PERCENT ROYALTY RATE GOING TO A MAXIMUM OF 25 MILLION DOLLARS. THERE ARE OTHER SMALLER PROVISIONS, BUT NO MAJOR DOLLARS ARE INVOLVED. THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT ITSELF WILL WAIVE ANY RIGHTS IT MIGHT HAVE FOR DOLLARS UNDER THIS ARRANGEMENT.

GENERAL KERWIN.

GENERAL KERWIN: I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THIS WAS A DECISION OF THE UNIFORMED GREEN SUIT ARMY.

SECRETARY ALEXANDER: GENERAL KERWIN SAID THAT HE CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THIS WAS A DECISION OF THE UNIFORMED GREEN-SUIT ARMY.

Q: WILL THE GUNS BE, I ASSUME MANUFACTURED IN THIS COUNTRY, ADAPTED TO AN AMERICANIZED DESIGN (INAUDIBLE)?

A: THIS IS CORRECT.

Q: WHERE WILL THEY BE MANUFACTURED?
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A: WELL, THE ONLY TUBE LOCATION IN THE COUNTRY IS WATERVLIET ARSENAL, NEW YORK.

Q: HOW MANY ROUNDS ARE AVAILABLE, MR. SECRETARY, FOR THIS 120MM GUN AT THE PRESENT TIME? WHAT TYPES OF ROUNDS ARE AVAILABLE?

A: LET ME ASK DR. LABERGE TO ANSWER THE QUESTION ON THE SPECIFIC GUN AMMUNITION.

DR. LABERGE: THERE IS AVAILABLE NOW A KINETIC ENERGY ROUND AND A HEAT ROUND. WE PROBABLY WILL MODIFY THE KINETIC ENERGY ROUND TO INCLUDE A DEPLETED URANIUM CAPABILITY. THE OTHER ROUNDS ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE BUT BEING DISCUSSED.

Q: HAVE ANY OF THEM BEEN DEVELOPED? DO THEY EXIST ANYWHERE OTHER THAN ON PAPER?

DR. LABERGE: OTHER THAN THE TWO THAT I DESCRIBED, NO.

Q: WILL YOU DESCRIBE THAT A LITTLE MORE FOR THOSE OF US WHO DON'T KNOW THAT MUCH ABOUT IT?

DR. LABERGE: THE KINETIC ENERGY ROUNDS ARE OF THE

KIND CONVENTIONALLY USED TODAY IN OUR 105 DESIGN
INCREASED TO THE 120 CALIBER AND MODIFIED TO ACCOMMODATE
THE GREATER RESOURCES AND LARGER ACCELERATIONS IN THE
120, BUT ESSENTIALLY THE SAME BASIC KIND OF DART
WHICH IS USED IN THE KINETIC ENERGY ROUND IN 105.
THE HEAT ROUNDS ARE AGAIN SIMILAR BUT ADAPTED TO THE
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DIFFERENT DIAMETER AND THE HIGHER CHAMBER PRESSURES.
THE HEAT ROUND BEING ESSENTIALLY A FOCUSED BLAST.

Q: HOW MANY OF THESE ROUNDS CAN BE STOWED IN THE
TURRET OF THE XM-1 TANKS AVAILABLE TO THE CREW AND
HOW DOES THAT COMPARE WITH THE NUMBER OF 105 ROUNDS
THAT CAN BE STOWED IN THE TURRET, AVAILABLE IN THE
CREW?

DR. LABERGE: I GUESS I WOULD REALLY LIKE THAT WE ANSWER
YOU WITHIN JUST A DAY OR TWO TO SORT OUT WHAT IS
CLASSIFIED AND WHAT ISN'T. I AM NOT SURE WHAT OUR
POSITION ON THAT IS.

GEN. KERWIN: I CAN ANSWER THAT QUESTION. THE NUMBER
OF ROUNDS OF 105 IS 55. IN THE CASE OF THE GERMAN
120, IT IS 48. WHEN YOU SAY IN THE TURRET, THAT IS
IN THE WHOLE COMPARTMENT. I DON'T WANT TO DIFFEREN-
Tiate BETWEEN THE BUSTLE AND THE PLATFORM AND THE HULL.

Q: MR. SECRETARY, COULD YOU TELL US (INAUDIBLE) WHY
THE 120 IS BETTER OR WILL BE BETTER IN THE FUTURE THAN
THE 105? IS IT LONGER RANGE OR MORE POWERFUL WEAPON?

SEC. ALEXANDER: FOR THE PRESENT, AS WAS INDICATED,
OF COURSE, THE 105 MORE THAN ADEQUATELY MEETS THE THREAT.
IN ANTICIPATING WHAT DEVELOPMENTS MIGHT TAKE PLACE IN
SOVIET ARMOR AND SOVIET TANKS IN THE FUTURE, THE
CAPACITY OF THE 120, WHEN COMPARED WITH THE 105, IS
SUFFICIENTLY BETTER; THAT AS PRUDENT PEOPLE IT MADE
SENSE, AS YOU HEARD GENERAL KERWIN SAY, THE GREEN
SUITERS FELT AND THOSE OF US IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES
THAT IT MADE SENSE TO ANTICIPATE WHAT THE FUTURE

COULD HOLD. AND THEREFORE, FROM THE POINT OF VIEW
OF THE U.S SOLDIER THAT WE SHOULD LOOK TO THE FUTURE
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AND SEE THAT WE CAN MORE THAN ADEQUATELY MEET THE
THREAT IN THE FUTURE.

Q: SIR, IS IT LONGER RANGE, IS IT MORE PENETRATING

POWER? WHAT MAKES IT BETTER?

A: WELL, IT DOES HAVE MORE PENETRATING POWER, AND
INDEED IT IS LONGER RANGE AS WELL.

Q: IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE?

A: I THINK THAT WOULD, OF ITSELF, BE SUFFICIENT,
MORE PENETRATING.

Q: WHAT ARE THE RANGES, CAN YOU TELL US?

A: THE RANGES ARE CLASSIFIED.

Q: WAS IT LONGER RANGE AND DID IT HAVE MORE PENETRATING
POWER THAN THE BRITISH 120?

A: THE BRITISH 120 PERFORMED AS WELL, IN GENERAL,
AND IN FACT ALL THREE GUNS DID QUITE WELL IN THE
TEST. BY AGREEMENT OF ALL THREE GOVERNMENTS, NONE
OF US WILL DISCUSS THE DETAILS OF THE TEST, BUT AS
A GENERALITY THAT IS ACCURATE.

THE INTEROPERABILITY THAT COMES FROM THE SMOOTH BORE
GERMAN 120 WAS OF SIGNIFICANT MOMENT TO US, CONCERNING
THE POTENTIAL TANK FLEET OF THE GERMANS TO MAKE US
FEEL THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO GO WITH THE SMOOTH BORE
GERMAN 120 AS OPPOSED TO THE BRITISH 120. BUT AGAIN,
THE BRITISH WEAPON WAS AN EXCELLENT ONE.
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Q: WHAT IS THE ADDED COST OF THIS DEVELOPMENT TO
THE TANK PROGRAM? YOU WILL HAVE TO SET UP A 120
MILLIMETER PRODUCTION LINE, PLUS THE TUBES, IS THAT
FAIR TO SAY A BILLION DOLLAR PROGRAM?

A: NO, I DIDN'T THINK IT IS FAIR TO SAY QUITE THAT
MUCH. I WOULD SAY THAT THE BEST LONG-RANGE PREDICTIONS
WOULD BE TO PLACE IT IN PERCENTAGE TERM OVER THE
LIFE CYCLE OF DEVELOPMENT AND THAT WOULD BE, WE
ESTIMATE, BETWEEN TWO AND SIX PERCENT ADDITIONAL COST.

Q: WHAT IS THIS TWO TO SIX PERCENT, MR. SECRETARY, TWO
TO SIX PERCENT OF WHAT?

A: OVER THE LONG TERM COSTS OF THE MAIN ARMAMENT IT
WOULD BE TWO TO SIX PERCENT MORE AS A RESULT OF THE
120.

Q: THE PROGRAM COST?

A: LIFE CYCLE COST.

Q: CAN YOU TELL US WHAT THAT IS IN DOLLARS?

Q: IN THE NUMBER OF GUNS?

A: WELL, I WOULD SAY THAT NUMBER OF GUNS OBVIOUSLY RELATES TO HOW MANY TANKS MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE PRODUCED. IF ONE WERE TALKING IN THE RANGE OF 7,000 TANKS OVER A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME, WHICH IS CERTAINLY A POSSIBILITY, THEN THE DOLLARS WOULD PROBABLY BE LESS THAN A BILLION DOLLARS AT THE UPPER SIDE.

Q: THE QUESTION OF THE COMBUSTIBILITY OF THE CASING AND THE FIN STABILIZED PROBLEM. HAVE YOU HAD ANY UNCLASSIFIED

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DIFFICULTY WITH THE AMMUNITION THUS FAR, AND WHAT DIFFICULTIES ARE THEY?

A: I GUESS THERE WAS DIFFICULTY MANY YEARS AGO WITH COMBUSTIBLE CASING. THERE WERE TESTS THAT WERE DONE IN PANAMA OF COMBUSTIBLE CASING THAT INDICATED THAT MANY OF THOSE DIFFICULTIES HAVE BEEN RESOLVED. WHAT IS IMPORTANT DURING THE PERIOD BETWEEN NOW AND 1981 IS TO SEE IF INDEED THERE ARE ANY PROBLEMS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN SOLVED, BUT THAT WOULD NOT APPEAR TO BE A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM AT THE PRESENT TIME.

Q: THE AGREEMENT THAT YOU REFERRED TO WITH THE BRITISH ON AMMUNITION TECHNOLOGY, WHAT PRECISELY IS THAT?

DR. LABERGE: IT WAS A RECOGNITION THAT THE TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING FAIRLY RAPIDLY BOTH IN ARMOR AND IN AMMUNITION, AND THAT AS THE ARMOR OPPORTUNITIES CHANGE YOU MAY WISH TO HAVE DIFFERENT AMMUNITION. SO THE ALLIES CONTINUE TO WISH TO WORK TOGETHER, AND THIS DECISION DOES NOT AT ALL PRECLUDE OUR WORKING WITH THE BRITIS; ON ADVANCED AMMUNITION TECHNIQUES. IN FACT, WE DO

INTEND TO DO THAT.

Q: WHICH COULD MEAN AMMUNITION FOR THIS GUN?

DR. LABERGE: IT IS TECHNIQUE; APPLICABLE TO THEIR GUN OR TO OUR GUN, EITHER ONE.

Q: HAS THERE BEEN ANY INDICATION THAT THE BRITISH MIGHT THEMSELVES GO FOR SMOOTH BORE NOW IN THE INTERESTS UNCLASSIFIED

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OF INTEROPERABILITY?

A: TO MY KNOWLEDGE THERE HAS NOT BEEN.

Q: WHAT ARE THE MODIFICATIONS REQUIRED TO PRODUCE IT IN THE U.S.?

DR. LABERGE: THE MODIFICATIONS ARE RELATIVELY SMALL TO PRODUCE THE GUN IN THE UNITED STATES. THE BREECH THAT THE GERMANS HAVE PROBABLY WILL BE REDESIGNED TO ALLOW US TO USE OUR MACHINE TOOLING. THAT WILL SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE THE COST OF THE BREECH BY APPLYING MACHINE TOOLING TO IT OF THE KIND THAT WATERVLIT HAS, WITH RESPECT TO THE AMMUNITION WE BELIEVE WE CAN ESSENTIALLY ADAPT OUR CURRENT PRODUCTION FACILITIES TO THE NEW DIMENSIONS OF THE ROUND AND THAT NO NEW MAJOR FACILITIES ARE REQUIRED, BUT RATHER ADAPTATION OF THE LINE WE HAVE TO BUILD THE PARTS.

Q: WOULD THE LEOPARD GUN AND THE XM-1 GUN BE ABLE TO USE EACH OTHER'S AMMUNITION, IS THAT YOUR CONCEPT?

A: YES

Q: CAN THE GERMAN 120 GUN PIERCE THE ARMOR OF A T-72?

A: YES

Q: I WAS TOLD, AND I BELIEVE IT WAS ON AN UNCLASSIFIED BASIS, THAT THE 120 WOULD ONLY GIVE YOU A THREE-TON IMPROVEMENT OVER THE 105, AND THAT THE 105 COULD PENETRATE THE ARMOR OF A 58-TON TANK.

A: A TON IMPROVEMENT IS NOT BY ANY MEANS THE ONLY MOVING FORCE IN IMPROVEMENT. CONFIGURATION OF ARMOR UNCLASSIFIED

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I THINK IS ANOTHER INDICATION, AND THAT MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE TO DO WITH WEIGHT. PROBABLY IT DOESN'T.

Q: AREN'T WE SELECTING A GUN AND MAKING A COMMITMENT AGAINST A THREAT WE ARE NOT SURE WILL EXIST.

A: WE ARE SENDING TO THE CONGRESS OUR BEST JUDGMENT ABOUT A FUTURE POTENTIAL THREAT. IT IS PART OF OUR JOB HERE TO MAKE AN ASSESSMENT ON THE FUTURE. WE HAVE DONE THAT, I ASSUME, IN ALL OUR HISTORY, AND IT WOULD BE PRUDENT TO CONTINUE IT FOR THE REST OF OUR HISTORY.

Q: MR. SECRETARY, COULD YOU TELL US HOW COMPATIBLE

THE XM-1 AND THE LEOPARD ARE NOW GOING TO BE, HOW MUCH COMMONALITY THERE IS? COULD WE HAVE A RUNDOWN OF ALL POINTS. ALSO, DID YOU SAY THERE IS POTENTIAL INTER-OPERABILITY WITH THE AMMUNITION OR THERE IS.

A: THERE IS. WALT, CAN YOU ANSWER ON ANY OTHER ITEMS?

DR. LABERGE: WELL THERE ARE A NUMBER OF ITEMS PRESENTLY BEING DISCUSSED, I THINK THE BIG COST ITEMS, LIKE THE TREADS, WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS MAKING THEM COMMON. WE HAVE NOT YET GOT A COMMON DESIGN, BUT WE THINK WE CAN ACHIEVE THAT.

WE ARE SURELY ABLE TO USE THE SAME AMMUNITION. THE GUN BARRELS SHOULD BE INTERCHANGEABLE, THE BREECHES MAY WELL BE. WE NEED TO SEE HOW THAT DESIGN TURNS OUT IN ADAPTING TO THE XM-1.

THERE ARE SEVERAL OTHER ITEMS THAT ARE BEING EXPLORED LIKE THE NIGHT VISION EQUIPMENT AND OTHERS WHICH UNCLASSIFIED

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ARE BEING EXPLORED WITH AN INTENT TO MAKE IT HAPPEN, BUT THEY HAVE NOT YET BEEN COMPLETED.

GENERAL KERWIN: CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF THE FIRE CONTROL.

DR. LABERGE: YES, AND I THINK THE FIRE CONTROL GENERAL KERWIN WAS MENTIONING, THERE ARE PORTIONS OF THAT WHICH WILL BE SIMILAR.

Q: AND THE ENGINES, WHAT IS THE STORY ON THOSE?

A: THE ENGINE IS BEING TESTED BY THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC, AND THEY MAY OR MAY NOT CHOOSE TO CONSIDER IT FOR A SUBSEQUENT PRODUCTION. I DOUBT IF IT COULD BE CONSIDERED FOR ANY IMMEDIATE USE.

Q: IF THEY DO NOT, THEN THEY DON'T HAVE COMMON FUEL, IS THAT RIGHT, OR IS IT?

DR. LABERGE: I PERSONALLY JUST DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER.

Q: DOES ANYBODY?

VOICE: YOU CAN HAVE COMMON FUEL--EVEN DIESEL AND TURBINE.

Q: YOU CAN?

VOICE: YES, OUR TURBINE WILL BURN DIESEL.

Q: CAN YOU TELL US WHEN THE FIRST XM-1S WILL COME FROM THE PRODUCTION LINE AND HOW MANY WILL COME IN THE FIRST YEARS?

A: WELL, THE XM-1S ARE PRESENTLY SCHEDULED TO BE COMING OFF THE PRODUCTION LINE IN 1980. SO THAT --
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Q: ARE THERE NOT ANY IN 1979?

A: WELL, THE VERY FIRST ONES, BUT THEY WILL NOT BE COMING OFF THE LINE IN ANY NUMBERS UNTIL 1900.

Q: HOW MANY XM-1S WITH 105S WILL BE PRODUCED BY 1984? ISN'T THAT THE YEAR THAT YOU MENTION HERE AS THE POSSIBILITY OF THE 120 COMING IN?

A: WELL, THE MOST PRECISE ANSWER I CAN GIVE YOU TO THAT IS POSSIBLY AS HIGH AS A FEW THOUSAND BUT THE RATE OF PRODUCTION, THE QUESTIONS THAT WE HAVE INDICATED WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ANSWERED ON THE 120, AND THE SPEED WITH WHICH THEY ARE ANSWERED, THE AMOUNT OF PRODUCTION MONEY WE RECEIVE FROM THE CONGRESS WILL BE DRIVING FORCES AS TO THE SPECIFIC AMOUNTS.

Q: POSSIBLY THEN ALL THE TANKS THAT ARE CURRENTLY APPROVED COULD BE EQUIPPED WITH THE 105?

A: WELL, I GUESS ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE IN THIS WORLD, BUT THAT IS UNLIKELY.

Q: I UNDERSTOOD YOU WERE TRYING TO NEGOTIATE A ROYALTY FREE LICENSING AGREEMENT. IF THAT IS SO, WHY DID YOU FAIL?

A: WELL, THAT ISN'T SO.

Q: I JUST WANT TO CLEAR UP ONE LITTLE THING. WILL ALL THE 120S BE PRODUCED IN THIS COUNTRY FOR OUR TANK?

A. THAT IS RIGHT.
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Q: DID YOU SAY (INAUDIBLE) RETROFIT? YOU MAY HAVE BEEN ASKED ABOUT THAT AND IT WENT BY ME. ARE YOU PLANNING TO RETROFIT THE --

A: THERE ARE NO CONCLUSIONS AS FAR AS THAT IS CONCERNED.

Q: DO YOU HAVE THE NAME OF THE PRODUCING COMPANY?

A: RHEINMETALL.

Q: DO YOU ANTICIPATE ANY OPPOSITON OR SIGNFICANT
OPPOSITION ON THE HILL FROM THIS "BUY AMERICA" BUNCH
UP THERE?

A: WELL, I WOULDN'T DESCRIBE ANY ELEMENT ON THE HILL
AS A BUNCH, NOT AS LONG AS I HAVE TO DEAL WITH THEM.

Q: THAT WAS MY WORD.

A: THAT INDEED WAS YOUR WORD. I WOULD SAY THAT IT IS
MOST IMPORTANT TO DO AS WE ARE DOING AND THAT IS
RECOMMEND, AND NOT PRESUME IN OUR DEALINGS WITH THE
CONGRESS. DR. PIERRE HAS BRIEFED THE CONGRESS ON THIS
PROGRAM. WE WILL CONTINUE TO DISCUSS WITH THEM ALL
AND EVERY ELEMENT OF THIS PROGRAM AND OUR REASONING
FOR IT. I DO BELIEVE THAT IF THE REASONING WE GIVE
TO THEM IS THE SAME REASONING THAT DUTCH KERWIN AND WALT
LABERGE AND I HEARD THAT THEY WILL REACH THE SAME
CONCLUSION. BUT OBVIOUSLY THEY HAVE THE RIGHT AND WILL
MAKE THEIR OWN PERSONAL JUDGMENTS. I WOULD SAY THAT IT
IS A SENSIBLE PROGRAM FOR THE FUTURE OF THIS NATION,
A SENSIBLE PROGRAM FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE UNITED
STATES SOLDIER, AND IT MAKES SENSE FOR US TO BE PRUDENT
AS WE LOOK TO THE LONG TERM. IT WOULD BE OUR HOPE THAT
WE CAN CONVINCE THOSE IN CONGRESS OF THAT. I MAKE
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NO PRESUMPTIONS THAT WE WILL BE UNABLE TO DO SO.

VANCE

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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